WING MOVEMENTS OF BIRDS.

Well Marked Characteristics of Those with Sustained Power of Flight.

All birds of great and sustained powers of flight have one well marked characteristic—they have long wings, with sharply pointed ends. And the general truth of this will be at once admitted if the rule be applied to species celebrated for rapid flight. Another point is worthy of notice. The apparent speed of flight to an unpracticed eye is most deceptive. A heron, as it rises and flaps languidly along the course of a brook, appears not only to progress slowly, but to use its wings in like manner. And yet the duke of Argyll has pointed out, and every one may verify the statement by his watch, that the heron flaps its wings at a rate of not less than from one hundred and twenty to one hundred and fifty times in a minute. This is counting only the downward strokes, so that the bird really makes from two hundred and forty to three hundred separate movements a minute.

Our short-winged game birds fly with incredible velocity, and any attempt to observe or count their wing movements leaves but a blurred impression upon the eye, whilst in some species so quick is the vibratory movement as to prevent it being seen. Driven grouse, flying "down wind," have been known to seriously stun sportsmen by falling upon their heads. A grouse does not move its wings as rapidly as a partridge, though a man was once clean knocked out of a battery by a grouse which had cannoned and killed another bird in midair; and colliding is not an infrequent occurrence. As illustrating the above qualities of flight, the case of the kestrel, or windover, may be taken. On a summer day one may frequently see this pretty little falcon standing against the blue, in what seems an absolutely stationary position, as though suspended by an invisible silken thread. But let a meadow mouse so much as move and it drops to the sward in an instant.

USEFUL SUGGESTIONS.

If you would preserve the beauty of plated silver, keep it in a warm, dry room.

If the rollers of a wringer are sticky or covered with lint, pass a cloth dampened with kerosene between them.

A sooty chimney can be cleaned by firing a gun or pistol up the flue. The concussion dislodges the soot and it tumbles down.

Mildew may be removed by rubbing common yellow soap on it, then salt and starch over that; rub all in well and lay in the bright sunshine.

Instead of keeping ice in a dish, where it will quickly melt, tie flannel loosely on the dish so that it drops into the bowl, and keep the ice in a flannel bag.

A good cement for china consists of a quarter of an ounce of gum aracia dissolved in half a wineglassful of boiling water with sufficient plaster of paris added to make a stiff paste.

IN EUROPEAN SOCIETY.

Americans Rarely Succeed in Entering the Inner Circles.

Americans, says Vogue, fail to realize that Europeans recognize no social or class distinction in this country. Our people know that this is a republic, that it has been a republic for more than a century, and that the principal doctrine upon which the entire national fabric is founded is that of universal equality. They cannot, therefore, understand that there should be any kind of class distinction or gradations of society. In their eyes all Americans are equal, and the question as to what coterie or clique their American acquaintances belong to in this country weighs but very little with the grand monde in Europe. It is utterly immaterial to them whether their American acquaintance has ever had a grandfather or not: or, if he had, who his grandfather was. They do not care one brass farthing whether he or she happens to be a "born millionaire" or a "made millionaire," and they take their American friends purely and entirely on their merits, altogether irrespective of the social status and prestige they may enjoy on this side of the Atlantic.

But once an American has succeeded in getting himself accepted by the best European society, his position is really a most delightful one, since he is regarded as beyond the pale of class distinction, and is allowed a freedom and a latitude which would never be accorded to any native, no matter how high his or her rank. Notwithstanding all that is claimed to the contrary, there are relatively very few Americans who may really be said to have penetrated the inner circles of European society.

Petrified Wood for Chinese Coffins.

A curious source of wealth is reported by the French consul at Mongtze, in Upper Tonkin. It lies in wood mines. The wood was originally a pine forest, which the earth swallowed in some cataclysm. Some of the trees are a yard in diameter. They lie in a slanting direction and in sandy soils, which cover them to a depth of about eight yards. As the top branches are well preserved it is thought the geological convulsion which buried them cannot be of very great antiquity. The wood furnished by these timber mines is imperishable, and the Chinese gladly buy it for coffins.

Literary Fame That Did Not Pay.

Literary fame does not always mean wealth in France. In the list of tobacco shop licenses just published appears the names of the widows of John Lemoinne and Camille Rousset, the Academicians, and of the novelist, Leon Cladel, while the Soleil makes an appeal to charity for the two sisters of Leconte de Lisle, who are old and had been entirely dependent on the poet.

The average weight of 20,000 men and women, weighed in Boston, was, men, 141¾ pounds; women, 124¼ pounds.

The water that pours over the falls of Niagara is wearing the rock away at the rate of five yards in four years.